**WINS Newsletter**

**VOLUME 8 ISSUE 4**

**DECEMBER 2011**

My First Fossil Hunt

As part of an NSF grant, Dr. Ted Daeschler, the Academy’s VP of Systematics & Library and Associate Curator of Vertebrate Paleontology, gave a three-part series on “fossil hunting” to the WINS II. The first part was “Fossil Field Work: Where, Why and How”; the second was the “hunt” itself, and the third was “Curation and Research of Fossils”. The below article is about the fossil hunt on the Red Hill area of Renovo, PA.

On my first real fossil hunt, I went with a selected group of WINS and were lucky enough to be under the leadership of Dr. Ted Daeschler, or as they call him in the Paleo Lab - “The King of Vertebrate Paleontology”. When I first stepped onto the bus, my stomach turned with anxiety and excitement. I was going to be out in the field, like a real researcher - no one knows how intimidating that can be. In the Academy’s Paleo Lab, I always talk about what goes on during a real life dig, but this time I was actually going to experience it myself.

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**Women In Natural Sciences (WINS) is an innovative and successful science enrichment program conducted by the Academy of Natural Sciences of Drexel University in collaboration with the School District of Philadelphia. Since its founding in 1982, WINS has been providing female public school students with hands-on science classes, scientific literacy and skill-building activities, and opportunities for personal growth in a uniquely nurturing setting.**

**WINS I**

First Class of Winter Session
Wednesday, January 11th 4:00pm to 5:30pm

Field Trip - Wagner Museum
Monday, January 16th 9:00am to 2:00pm

Field Trip - Adventure Aquarium
Saturday, March 3rd 9:00am to 4:00pm

Field Trip - Spring Recess trip to Delaware Aquatic Education Resource Center
Monday to Thursday April 2nd to 5th

**WINS II**

Seniors PEEC Trip!
Friday to Monday, January 13th-16th

The Nature of Science Workshop
Thursday, January 19th 4:30pm to 6:00pm

“Love Yourself: Mind, Body and Soul” Workshop
Saturday, February 11th 9:30am to 3:00pm

“My Life After WINS” Alumnae Panel
- Thursday, March 8th 4:00pm to 6:00pm

**Dates to Remember**

- WINS I
  - First Class of Winter Session
  - Field Trip - Wagner Museum
  - Field Trip - Adventure Aquarium
  - Field Trip - Spring Recess trip to Delaware Aquatic Education Resource Center

- WINS II
  - Seniors PEEC Trip!
  - The Nature of Science Workshop
  - “Love Yourself: Mind, Body and Soul” Workshop

All activities are rain or shine!

Please let Ms. Betsy know if you cannot make it to an activity beforehand.

Jasmin White, right in the white shirt, with Janai Kaita working hard looking for fossils at the Red Hill section of Renovo, PA.

In Your Own Words

In honor of WINS 30th anniversary, we would like to include some recollections from WINS alumnae as part of the Academy’s “200 Years. 200 Stories.” project. (http://www.ansp.org/200/stories)

We’re looking for 200-250 word stories that answer any or all of the following questions: What was WINS like when you participated? How did your WINS experience influence your career choices? What is your favorite WINS memory?

Please send me your stories (and photos) to payne@ansp.org by Wednesday, February 1, and be sure to include your year(s) of participation and contact information. We’d love to hear from you!

Betsy Payne, WINS Manager
Visiting the Bronx Zoo

As a WINS I, I have had the opportunity to visit many different places and learn a lot of different things. Amongst the places that I visited was the Bronx Zoo.

The Bronx Zoo was an amazing experience because it is far different from the zoo that I’m used to going to—the Philadelphia Zoo. It is so much bigger! There is a larger selection of animals and they do not have all of the same types as we do in the Philadelphia Zoo. And since the animals are a bit wilder, they need and have more space.

I was able to see a bunch of animals that I had never seen before. I also got to visit some really neat attractions, such as the Sea Lion Pool, where I watched a group of sea lions being fed. During feeding times the sea lions also perform, and their movements help the zookeepers get a better inspection of their bodies, to make sure they are okay.

I was also able to see the Mouse House, which is kept really dark because most of the mice there are nocturnal. Since the zoo is so big, I didn’t get to see everything in it. And it was a lot of necessary walking to get to the places that I wanted to check out. But it was like nothing I had ever seen before, and all of the walking was worth it in the end. It is definitely one of my favorite WINS trips so far!

Alyssa Fairfax, WINS I

College Tour 2011

Being as curious as I am about the environment I would one day fit into, I find it very important to go on as many college visits as possible. The college visits offer a chance to really see a school functioning and the students in action on a normal day. For most visits, the students were always busy and on the move—and I loved it. For the WINS Annual College Tour of 2011, the universities we visited were no exception. There were students everywhere—traveling to classes, working independently or in a group, or off to an activity they had for the day. Everyone was being productive in his or her own way and showing how active the campus really was.

Even in the chilly weather of Western Pennsylvania, our WINS group experienced nothing but warm welcoming from every school we visited, including Pennsylvania State University, University of Pittsburgh, Shippensburg University, Indiana University of Pennsylvania, and Carlow University. As a group, we learned a new thing about each one of these schools that sparked our personal interest and would persuade us to apply. Big thanks to those schools that made our college tour possible and pleasant!

Big thanks to our additional chaperones who come on the tour and to the WINS alumni who made it even more memorable. And a special big thanks to Ms. Betsy for making the experience possible and a bunch of fun (as she does every year)!

The ride to Western Pennsylvania was really swift and smooth on the coach bus we took. The hotel we stayed in was beautifully crafted (in my opinion) and the service was great! Of course Ms. Betsy makes it interesting with making seniors of WINS den mothers. I believe that was a great experience too! With many surprises along the way, the WINS 2011 College Tour was another tour gone excellent—in my opinion the best yet!

Marissa Pinder, WINS I

Dual role - WINS Alumna / College Tour Guide

I had almost forgotten what it felt like to be a WINS girl. It has been years since I’ve rowed a canoe, pitched a tent, or went hiking through the woods. Our trips to PEEC were ages ago, and can I barely remember the days spent poking around in Stinkpot Pond. But it was–it’s just so much fun to be in the wilderness that made WINS an irreplaceable part of my life. The opportunities it afforded to an otherwise underprivileged teen-aged female like myself were limitless. I would not be where I am today (A junior at the Pennsylvania State University) had it not been for the WINS program. It was an honor to be able to share my experiences with the girls this year on their annual college tour, not to mention exciting to see so many familiar and eagery faces. I tried hard not to disappoint as I led them on my first collegiate tour.

Showing off the twenty four miles of pavement at Penn State was fun but tiring, to say the least. By the time the girls had come full circle, they were clamoring for lunch, and rightfully so. I had just crammed my brains (I hope!) with all of the ins and outs of campus life. But of all the things we saw–of all the information I rattled off–my biggest point was this: Academics are only one part of what college has to offer. It’s what you do outside of the classroom that determines the path your life will take. If the girls remember nothing else, they will remember to get involved. That, and to stay away from the pizza in East dining commons!

I couldn’t help but feel nostalgic towards those I affectionately call my babies–our current senior class. I remember their days as WINS I, fresh out of middle school and getting used to their new high school independence. Making friends was easy, but most importantly they taught me how to be a leader, and for that, I am grateful. But now my babies are anything but. They are women ready to take on the world and even more excited to be on the ‘nitty-gritty’. But most of all, I wanted to excite you. College will truly be the best years of your life. But it’s not about partying and getting wasted. It is a time of self discovery. It’s about realizing your potential and becoming the people you’ve always wanted to be. Accomplishing things you never thought possible. I see all of this in your future, and I wish you the best of luck!

It was fun to be one of the girls again. To see my sister. To catch up with Miss Betsy. I hope I provided some insight into what college life is like; answered any questions about matriculation. Gave you the “low-down” on the “nitty-gritty”. But most of all, I wanted to excite you. College will truly be the best years of your life.

Aminah Ford-Ellison, WINS Alumna